

Seeking the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 0 0] but he giveth more grace wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble but he giveth more grace wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble Epistle of James chapter 4 and the 6th verse we looked at this first clause this morning we noted the one of the greatest blessings my friends that the people and children of God shall ever know is that grace is the free gift of God and is outpoured upon the church of Christ now I believe firstly we look to this word as it relates to the continuing need of grace it was grace that called our souls at first that's how you and I came into life if so be that we have it in our hearts it was divine grace outpoured from God and it brought spiritual life but that was the calling by grace we spoke much this morning about the pathway which the apostle here James speaks of it brings us into the need of more grace but it is a promise my friends this word you may look at your path and we do from time to time don't we and we wonder how we shall manage how the scene will end sometime we're convinced that we shall come to nothing we shall often convince we shall fail and fail miserably but this is a glorious promise which the apostle by the Holy Ghost is able to give the church of Christ he giveth more grace wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble and now we looked at various ways in which the and various pathways in which the need of grace is given and I believe towards the close of the discourse this morning we spoke of that word in the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might become rich and we spoke of that word also of the apostles the apostle Paul in the epistle to the Philippians where he reminds the Philippian church of a great blessing which the church of Christ should seek to know and not only the church of Philippi but every vessel of mercy down to the end of time and he said let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus and we glanced at one of two things in that word which proves the grace of God and the grace of Jesus Christ and I believe this my friends that you will from time to time will seek to see this and know this in your own walk and conversation and in your profession if you have made an open profession that you may be blessed with this sacred mind this was in Christ Jesus let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus we reminded you of that wondrous work of Jesus Christ what condescension was found in Christ when you consider he who was as the word tells us being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God

but what condescension either was displayed by coming into this world entering into this world he was engaged to come and he was engaged to come on behalf of wretched sinners lost and ruined in the Adam fall he was engaged to come to offer his life a ransom for many to shed his blood that sin might be put away the atoning blood of Jesus Christ the peace speaking blood of Jesus Christ that was what is to be offered at Calvary but this great work given to him taken up by him and walked in this world for 33 years oh how he demonstrated that grace and my friends that's the grace that we would seek for that's the grace we would want if you've got grace you'll be you'll be you desire this you want to be more like your Lord and Master oh you'll need that grace if you're in the way everlasting you'll need that grace and oh hell you'll be brought to need it when we when the Apostle James speaks about giving more grace he knew the pathway and he knew that the church of Christ blessed with grace that is living the life of God in the soul as the warfare continues as the opposition to the grace of God in the soul continues he knew that to walk the pathway upright and that the church of Christ shall not make shipwreck and shall be complete in him that there is a need of this grace but oh that the church of Christ might seek for and you and I might seek for this mind this grace oh how it was displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ we said that though he was co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit and yet what was the grace displayed well he made what the word of God tells us and we'll read it that he made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross

I spoke this morning a little about the way the way of a child of God the pathway that you and I shall walk if we're amongst God's spiritual family and from first to last my friends you will need grace you'll not walk none of it not an inch of it not a yard of this pathway will you walk in your own strength nor in your own wisdom it's a way that is so opposite to nature it's a way that's sometimes opposite to sense and reason and it's a way my friends you'll only walk as grace is given you it's a crucifying way it's a way of separation and you'll know the need of grace when it comes to separation well the apostle knew this pathway and so he could point the church at Philippi to Christ as an example of no reputation men set Christ at naught and I'll set you at naught if you display the grace of

God in your soul and you walk upright in this present evil world and the fear of God is in sweet operation in your heart you'll be like your lord and master set at naught ah but the grace the grace that's needed the grace that's needed made himself of no reputation took upon him the form of a servant he who is king of kings and lord of lords took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and he knew the infirmities of men not the sinful infirmities oh no not the sinful infirmities he knew what it was to be wearied in the way he knew what it was to naturally be wearied in his pathway Jesus being wearied in the way sat at the well of Samaria and he knew what it was to be opposed by Satan he who is holy and harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners

I once was told by a certain servant of God how could Christ be tempted like you and I but the scriptures tell me that he was at all points tempted like as we are yet without sin yet without sin oh he knew the infirmities that you and I are troubled with a tempting devil and the rage of men was outpoured upon him but there is this word I wanted to just remind you of the grace that was displayed in Jesus Christ and he giveth more grace you have Christ here as a most glorious example you'll not walk the depths as he walked but you'll walk the way that he walked in a measure and so the apostle could say that in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death now the way which the children and people of

[9 : 33] God walk you will excuse me my simplicity but my friends it demands obedience it demands obedience Jesus Christ was obedient unto death even the death of the cross it demands obedience the Lord Jesus Christ's way costs something and let me say this if you're a child of God your way will cost something or it will you'll be brought to see that there is something that has to be paid oh it may be that upon your upon you you'll know shame and reproach so did Jesus Christ and when he was threatened when he was threatened he spoke not he spoke not against his enemies or he could have done we might say but no he didn't as a lamb went to his shearers was done so he opened not his mouth that needs grace my friends to be still and to be quiet doesn't it but obedience the Lord's shown you a pathway he'll give you the grace to be obedient you're not walking any of the pathways of spiritual pathways whilst you walk this wilderness journey my friends without the need of his grace or you may think that you can manage and I'll come to one or two of them pathways and some of those exercises too in a moment that the children and people of

God are brought to know and they're brought to know this the need of his grace who is sufficient for these things but my friends if God gives you grace that's an all sufficient grace he giveth more grace it dwells with him there is a fullness of grace there's an all sufficiency then of grace in this fullness and sufficiency it is my friends most precious to say and believe that none of his people shall be found wanting of this grace as they go on in the journey but he became obedient unto death even the death of the cross I wondered as I was thinking about these words this afternoon whether there was such a character in the Lord's house that has a way to walk which is so opposite to what they want to walk so opposite to nature and to reason and to sense but the

Lord has put the way before his people and the Lord has walked the way when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them but he giveth more grace but then just for a moment I want to speak about the exercises of the children of God and the way in which the Lord directs his people to walk in those exercises we have ordinances in the church of Christ that the people of Christ are exercised about and burdened with and I believe half the hindrances and many of the fears will result from our own evil heart of unbelief but my friends the walk in the ways of the ordinances of God's house or in the exercises that the Lord puts in your heart is not dependent upon your wisdom or strength or grace your natural grace but it's dependent upon and it will be all sufficient grace granted

I remember when the Lord laid the ordinance of baptism upon my spirit he followed it with this word I will go in the strength of the Lord God God I will make mention of his righteousness and his only and that grace is all sufficient that grace is all sufficient my friends and it's the grace of obedience to fall into the hands of a gracious God and to cast all on him and he'll hold you up and he'll hold you on he giveth more grace but then

I was brought to think of the apostles pathway if you read Ephesians 3 you'll find there of the grace that was given the apostle a word which will be a word suitable to an exercised person if there is such a person amongst us who has an exercise respecting the ministry of the gospel the apostle writing to the Ephesian church speaks of this grace unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ now that grace my friends is another gift of God is this grace given not merited never will be free favourless of God unworthily unworthy sinners are in possession of it the Lord takes whom he will to thrust out on the walls of

[15 : 31] Zion and from the very day that exercise begins in the soul and as that as time goes on and that soul is brought to walk in the pathway of obedience in the exercise of the ministry I'll tell you this my friends and the Lord's servants know it that they are brought in absolute dependence on that grace and the Lord will know and he does bring his servants to total emptiness and complete poverty so that they are brought to depend on that grace there's been many a time my friends when I could say if anybody answered me respecting having a text yes I've got a text but what's to be said is in the Lord's hand because every word must begin from him he giveth more grace he doesn't send a man out to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and lead them to preach what they want to preach he giveth more grace but then I want to speak to about the obedience that grace brings we said that most of the hindrances come from underneath the fears of a natural heart that we may look at the pathway we may trace the pathway before us and we may and more and like Peter of old the more we look at the waves and the billows the more we feel or so unable to continue and to walk in those paths but he giveth more grace

I spoke this morning about the will of God and the need of grace to do the will of God and the will of God shall be done by his people and the Lord will see that his will shall be accomplished his appointment shall be kept and the Lord will direct and guide his people in the pathway but it will be by giving grace I've often felt this is very true you know the Lord doesn't drive his people along the pathway he leads them and he leads them by his grace or they may feel reluctant they may think that they've come to the end of all their strength it will be a mercy when you do or it will the Lord take away your natural wisdom as you walk along the pathway that leads to eternal glory you'll lean upon his grace more he giveth more grace whether you're in the church of Christ as a servant of God whether you hold office in the church of Christ all must be done with a single eye to God's honour and glory but all must be done in dependence upon this grace it is a mercy my friends if you're brought then to wait on him for those that wait shall not be brought to confusion he giveth more grace to walk the way though it seems so opposite though it seems so naturally foolish to do so he giveth more grace and then

I want to speak to the way in which the Lord causes his people to wait for him you know not all blessings are blessings which are revealed and applied and brought to pass immediately the Lord promises his people his grace and his help he promises his people through the word of God the way that they are to walk he leads them about and guides them they are dependent upon his grace in the time that he causes them to wait for him precious promises gracious directions which shall come to pass in their life the Lord leads his people where he will have them to be not just those who preach the gospel but all and each one of them and you may find as the Lord is pleased and condescends to guide you and direct you and place into your heart great and precious promises promises you think will come to pass but there's a waiting for them there's a watching over them there's a praying over them you know in the exercise of the ministry for instance if I may go back to that for a moment when you've got an exercise it doesn't follow that it's going to come to pass in one week's time it might be one year and it might be twenty years there's been many a servant of

God that's been bowed down with the exercise of the ministry over many many years now he maintains that exercise the Lord maintains it and keeps it alive and I encourage in this way or that way to continue in the exercise of that particular burden the fulfilment of it is in God's time you can't put your hand to the exercise you can't hasten it by a day and my friends you won't prevent it by a day either but what is needed to continue while this exercise is burning in your heart what is needed as you wait on the Lord this grace the grace of patience to wait his appointed time you look at that prophet Habakkuk you find there a very precious promise there's been many a servant of God has been encouraged by that by the words of Habakkuk and the

Lord answered me and said write the vision the exercise the burden that's in his heart write the vision and make it plain upon tables that he may run that readeth it for the vision is yet for an appointed time but at the end it shall speak and not lie though it tarry wait for it because it will surely come it will not tarry but let me tell you this my friends you will need grace to wait for it your old nature will give it up your old nature will lay it down and say well it's not for me it's obvious it's not coming to pass but if that exercise that burden whether it's the ministry the gospel or whatever it may be your own pathway yet to walk or so on the Lord knows what exercises in your heart and that it will come to pass the Lord put his hand to a work my friends it will come to fruition but you have to wait for it it may be weeks it may be months it may be years but you'll find this too and this is where you need this grace where there's an exercise where there's a burden you'll find opposition from old nature yes definitely and you might find it from some that you don't want to find it from it might be that if you open your mouth and tell it to someone they'll point out the impossibilities but God's a

[22 : 38] God of impossibility the vision is yet for an appointed time but at the end it shall speak and not lie though it tarry wait for it because it will surely come it will not tarry God's work will be performed but in the meantime but he giveth more grace to wait on him and to wait for him but we may come back to that in a moment but the apostle goes on to say wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud who's he talking about who are these people that God resists well first of all we have a substance here that is opposite to grace and that's pride and you know my friends remember this where the exercise of grace is in the heart and there shall not be found pride what's a sinner got to be proud of you go back some of you in your pathway what's a sinner got to be proud of he's got more to be ashamed of do you look back some of you sometimes

I do and I have to say with a good psalmist of old remember not against me the sins of my you the Lord knows the way in which we're brought to remember the foolishness and evils of the past but God resisteth the proud and it's not necessary the world we're talking about here is the pride of old nature that's in the heart of every child of God that raises up we spoke of the apostle Paul this morning and the Lord knows how to deal with the pride in our heart you know how to deflate it how to bring it down and how to bring us to realize this to chasten us for our pride God resisteth the proud what he gave the apostle Paul we mentioned this morning the thorn in the flesh that was because of that lest I should be exalted above measure lest I should be lifted up lest that old pharisaical pride should raise its head once again that he was so constantly aware of when he was a Pharisee

God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble coming up here today I was brought to look at a certain hymn writer's words and those words which will be well known by you I want to go just back a little more in my meditations upon the pathway he'll give more grace my friends if the Lord touches you or touches yours you'll need grace and I'll just remind you of Anne Steele's precious words I was driving up from Norfolk this morning and I thought of that pathway she walked not that I'm a well educated person in the pathways of Anne Steele but she had a great trouble she lost one she loved so dearly but the Lord gave her grace you know there are times in your life and mine when that's the only thing that will hold us and hold us up his grace well as I came along

I was through meditating upon those words of Anne Steele in the hymn 1010 father father what air of earthly bliss thy sovereign will denies accepted at thy throne of grace let this petition rise give me a calm a thankful heart from every murmur free that blessings of thy grace impart and make me live to thee but it may be too that in your pathway in providence that you'll come to a time when you'll need this grace and I want to just enter into that just very slightly you'll need grace to walk the pathway in providence it may be and it was with me one occasion when I was offered a situation and a place in the company I then worked for a good place nothing wrong with it a place which would demand much wisdom and much attention much hard work

I was I suppose somewhat attracted to that offer and place now that was man's dealings with me but God intervened and I've said it before perhaps but I would remind you again because it's a part of my spiritual experience the Lord entered into that pathway before I ever took it up and it by his intervention coming into the path it directed me another direction it brought me to where I am now where I live now and to the house of prayer that I go to now it wouldn't have done if I had followed man's suggestion and it was nothing wrong with the offer nothing wrong with the place it was quite honourable quite respectable and needed much wisdom but the Lord may intervene in your life some of you and whereas you may think that this is the way that you're to walk the Lord might well be pleased to enter into your pathway and put his hand on it and stop it and you'll need grace but the

[28 : 33] Lord will give grace then and I'll tell you how he gave grace how he will give grace when he denies to his people what the world think is their pathway their way to walk the Lord is very pleased you know and condescends in his great mercy when he intervenes in the pathway of his people he balances the thing by greater blessings greater blessings I'll tell you what he did for me he reminded me of what the apostle said in the third of Philipians he dropped this word in what things were gained to me those I counted lost for Christ and I saw in a moment it was like as if someone had drawn the curtains on the future pathway of my life and I saw in a moment if I had taken up that position then my heart would have been in it my endeavours would have been in it and I would have been completely immersed in the thing but God said what things were going to be those I counted lost for Christ but what was the balance in this my friends this he showed me Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ was exceedingly precious to my soul from that moment onwards and he said this compared with Christ in all beside no comeliness I see the one thing needful dearest Lord is to be one with thee I tell you this I thank my God from my very heart that he had intervened that he had took it away that I was not permitted to take it or have it or enter into it but oh the better blessing I had oh you have a view of Christ my friends you'll be willing to walk the path you'll be willing to let go of these worldly advantages oh the world can go and come as it wishes applies for and takes up situations just as it pleases but not God's people if they're under grace they're under his teaching if they're under his teaching they're under his appointments and the Lord knows what's in the pathway of each one of us and he'll bring us to them places but you'll find this he'll give you grace to acquiesce to his mind and will that doesn't come from nature when God puts his hand on something and directs your footsteps somewhere else when he takes you from one place to another or prevents you from going from one place to another he'll give you grace to fall before his sovereign will and own him as just and right to do as it pleaseth him he giveth more grace he'll balance your cloud he'll balance your cloud with himself and you'll be willing to walk the way which he has put before you to walk but he giveth more grace wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble now what will he do then to this pride of the heart which is in us by nature one of those most dreadful sins that a child of God often displays left to himself but dreads it in his heart what will he do well he'll chasten you for one thing he'll chasten you for one thing one of our hymns I was brought to see recently the truth in it we speak about and you hear about from the pulpit sometimes and read about the word of God how the Lord chastens his people if you're a child of God and pride is in your heart he'll chasten you for it he'll touch it he'll bring you to nothing if this was the word if God rebuked for pride he'll humble thy proud heart he knows how to do it brings his people down to utter helplessness and dependence upon him where there's grace in the heart pray against pride my friends where there is that natural inclination in the heart to pride and it's all it's in all of us it's in all of us the Lord is able to mar and mark the pathway by reason because of the pride of heart that is often found when it raises his ugly head wherefore he saith

God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble will the Lord grant his grace then that it might humble us we find in this chapter 4 this word humble yourselves in the sight of God and he shall lift you up but now that's not the work my friends of old nature the one verse before our text says the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy but he giveth more grace it's only by grace that you know the humility of the pathway and as I said a moment ago if you walk closer to Jesus Christ you'll walk the pathway of humility but grace is needed to be made humble but he but giveth grace unto the humble but we spoke also or we just dropped a hint this morning at the close how much grace is needed as we walk on in this pathway this wilderness journey if we're members of Christ's mystical body if we're found in a way everlasting it's a way of grace it's a way of grace and there is one of our hymns that speaks of grace teaching us to pray but what does that mean we speak and we desire the

[34 : 44] Holy Ghost to teach us to pray we ask to be taught by the Holy Spirit as we approach the throne of grace the words to speak to God to bring our burdens and our needs and trials and exercises to him but you know you'll need this grace to pray what does it mean to have grace in your prayers well it means this very simply my friends to pray in accordance with his will oh there's much talk about prayer and if you listen to some people's interpretations you'll think you could ask for what you want and get it oh you would you know you think you could go to God for the greatest thing that you want to possess in this world and God would be pleased to give it to you now that's not prayer but the grace to pray is to pray in accordance to his mind and will to seek to know that what you pray for is that you're not asking for something that goes opposite to what the

Lord's will and purposes are to you and that's the grace we need as we pray you know I sometimes feel and I want to be very tender in what these in these things but I often feel you know we get into affliction don't we we come into times of affliction and the first thing we do is ask for God to remove it ask for God to remove it we come into trials and we say Lord take it away take it away I want trials nobody wants trials the Lord grants you and I grace to pray in our times of need that they shall be profitable to us that's the grace to pray that's the grace that's needed in our petitions oh it's not the way the professor walks he doesn't want these things to distract and to trouble and to distress but I believe if you rightly view affliction or trials and such things as those that come into the way this is where you'll need grace to pray that

God will use them and use them to his honour and glory and for the benefit of your soul how many of God's spiritual people have come into trouble and out of trouble and they've had to say they wouldn't have had anything changed why because God has owned and blessed their souls in the trouble and they fell down before him and they've learned and profited by the affliction or the trial that they walked in you remember in the days of persecution in the Acts of the Apostles we read there in chapter 8 of the Acts I believe it is of my memory serves me right when Saul was persecuting the church of Christ and hailing them to prison and to death we find there that he made havoc entering into every house and hailing men and women committed to prison therefore they that scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word I'm sure this sort of Tarsus wouldn't take the honour of the prosperity of the church of Christ would he but by the means of persecution instead of annihilating the church of Christ he prospered wherever they went they took the gospel and so the gospel was declared he giveth more grace the Lord in his mercy then as we pass on in this wilderness and come into afflictions and come into trials and come into losses and the

Lord lays a cross upon you oh yes crosses are excellent but the Lord knows how to measure the cross that suits your shoulders and he knows what things to do he loads their shoulders the hymn writer says well with woe and thus obtains his end but my friends this is what we need I know it and you know it and it's this grace to fall before the Lord that these circumstances and situations may be profitable to our soul you go back in Old Testament scriptures to the days of Daniel and for their faith in their God three Hebrew children were thrown into the fire or it would have been easy wouldn't it to say we're bowed down to idolatry would have been easy they would have escaped the fire they would have escaped the derision of men but what did they get in exchange for their trust and their faith

Jesus Christ Jesus Christ that ungodly wretch who put them in the fire could say did we not put three men into the fire I see four men walking in the form of the fourth like unto the Son of God now I'm sure of this my friends as those Hebrew children came out of that fire unscathed untainted with the smoke of fire their bombs were gone did you notice when you read it last their bombs were gone they walked in liberty because they walked with Christ he giveth more grace the Lord grant us this grace then as we travel on that he might sanctify our path but there's two other things I want to bring before we close this grace is for time it's only for this wilderness journey you look at the psalm he will give both grace and glory grace is for this time state the Lord prepares his people for an eternal glory that blessed home which is prepared Christ speaks about it in the 14th chapter of

[40 : 38] John I go to prepare a place for you grace will bring you there and grace will uphold you in the way towards it but when time shall be no more with each of us grace will be concluded there is no need there is no need of grace when we come to glory oh that's a wondrous thought my friends you'll wonder how you'll manage as you travel on and new oppositions and circumstances rise up against you and trials and afflictions and crosses are your lot and you pray the Lord for grace but grace will give place to glory and you think of your petitions and prayers that you put up to God and seek by grace for his appearance and help prayer will be given place to praise that's a glorious exchange isn't it you want grace here below to walk but it's grace to the end and grace at the end

I spoke this morning very briefly of the apostles words I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand he displayed that grace he displayed what the hymn writer said ne'er would I covet man's esteem but part with all and follow him that's grace that is grace my friends to take the lowest place to be as Paul said though I be nothing you know when it comes to the hour and article of death the Lord grant us that grace to let go I'll tell you what grace will do but we must come to a close the psalmist speaks about it in speaking of his soul's trials and troubles and at the close of one of his psalms he says this thou hast loose my bonds you know by nature we're held very close to this world we hang on to time don't we we wouldn't be moved away from time they're all important and all the connections and relations in time hold us close to time things and they're all important but the Lord be pleased to grant you his grace you know he'll loosen the bond so that when it comes to the journey's end you will find it in the struggle it isn't a struggle you'll be like

Jacob Jacob was one who as he sowed so he reaped didn't he having deceived his own father Isaac so his sons deceived him and so he walked a pathway but when he came down to the end when he was blessed with once more that he was brought to see his Joseph and he was brought to know redeeming love the angel that redeemed me from all evil he said but when he came to the end we find that Jacob had nothing to do but to lift his feet in the bed and die the Lord grants us that grace in that day the world struggles to live the world struggles to remain alive and stay on this time stay the Lord's dear people have a view of Christ and a view of heaven and that glorious habitation which is prepared for them the Lord knows how to loosen the bonds and grace will do it and grace will bring you to your desired haven he giveth more grace wherefore he saith God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble for the Lord grant us the witness of his spirit and lead us by his grace and maintain us and uphold us by his grace and bring us to the end and grant us grace to leave time things to be with

Christ which is far better amen doing